

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, November 9, 1896, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 1331 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C. (November 9, 1896.) My dear Alec:

I spent part of yesterday reading Kidd's Social evolution and your marks and comments. These made the book twice as interesting to me. Haven't you some book that you are reading which you could mark and send me? It would be something like talking to you. I didn't agree with all your comments, for instance not that suggestion that Kidd's assertion that the great phenomenon, the real cause of the powerlessness of the classes against the masses of the French Revolution was the altruistic feeling among the classes, their sympathy with the struggles of the masses for equality. I do not think it is a "forced construction" for it has always seemed to me one of the great causes of the Revolution. The theories of Voltaire and Rousseau was the constant talk of the Salons and though of course the great majority of the "noblesse" were only dabbling with them, still a sufficiently large minority of the more generous young minds among them must have been seriously affected by them. And as it is impossible that a topic of so much interest to the educated rich people could long remain unknown to the ignorant poor they must have received it from their "masters" enriched with the comments favorable and unfavorable of these masters and been themselves far more powerfully affected. Those who did most to precipitate the conflict at last were nobles or of gentle blood, members of the King's own government.

2

And I think it is far more scientific and logical to believe with Kidd that the altruistic feelings of our day won their being to a cause working through long ages to one that can be seen to have slowly elevated that part of mankind which it influenced to a higher plane than that

Library of Congress

occupied by any other part, and to have acted most forcibly on that especial part which felt most keenly our Reformation-the Christian Faith.

I have filled my paper and told you no news. I have none to give. I was not well yesterday and staid in my room all day, but am all right now. Papa has given me some money from the Trust and I will have it put in a special ap. for me so that I alone can draw on it and leave all our general account for you. In this way we need not fear the accounts will overlap. I will put the Gypsum coupons to your account, that is \$450.00. I have drawn every penny of the balance left when Mr. McCurdy paid our Beinn Bhreagh bills and still have not paid Starr's bill for the Golden Wedding Vase. That is \$750.00.

Have you read the Natl. Geographic Magazine for this month? It contains two good papers, one by the "Great Walking Capital I" on the Transvaal and the other by Shaler on soil erosion which I wish you would explain to Mr. McInnis. It does trouble me dreadfully to see the waste from our hillside. Won't you find out the degree of our incline and not have any of it ploughed, that is more than 15 feet to the hundred. I think Mr. McInnis claims that while he usually ploughs across the hillside it is sometimes necessary to plough up and down. When he does this he might plough an occasional deep plough across to retain the soil.

With ever so much love, Yours.